

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and the discussion presented below. The amendments are supported by the application as filed and no new matter has been added by any of the amendments.

Claims 1-3 and 12 are amended, as described further below.

Claims 1-13 are now present in this application. Claims 1 and 12 have been rejected. Claims 2-11 are objected to as depending on a rejected base claim (claim 1). Claim 13 has been allowed.

Discussion

1. Priority Documents

The Primary Examiner is thanked for confirming receipt of the papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) and for placing them in the file.

2. Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement mailed on April 4, 2006, and received by the Office on April 7, 2006, was filed in error. The Applicants apologize for the inconvenience to the Office and request that this statement be withdrawn.

3. Rejection of claims 1 and 12 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Araki

The Primary Examiner rejected claims 1 and 12 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,979,160 to Araki ("Araki"). The rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons given below.

Claim 1, as amended, recites:

A recording medium drive unit, comprising:

an insertion part defining an insertion opening through which a recording medium is inserted;

a holder configured to receive the recording medium inserted through the insertion opening;

a first connector configured to be connected to a second connector on an insertion side of the recording medium;
a clamp mechanism configured to guide the insertion side of the recording medium to a predetermined position in the holder; and
a holder drive part configured to move the holder to a loading position at which the second connector is connected to the first connector.

The specification describes a preferred embodiment of the invention of claim 1. Thus, with reference numerals added for the Primary Examiner's convenience, and without limitation of the scope of claim 1, a recording medium drive unit (10) has an insertion part (16) through which (insertion opening 20) a recording medium (36, 46) is inserted; the recording medium drive unit (10) has a first connector (64) configured to be connected to a second connector (40, 50) on an insertion side (36a, 46a) of the recording medium (36, 46); a clamp mechanism (76, 77) is configured to guide the insertion side (36a, 46a) of the recording medium (36, 46) to a predetermined position in the holder (56); and a holder drive part (60) is configured to move the holder (56) to a loading position at which the second connector (40, 50) is connected to the first connector (64).

Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found in, for example, Figures 11 and 17 of the present application and the related portions of the specification.

According to claim 1 as amended, "a clamp mechanism configured to guide the insertion side of the recording medium to a predetermined position in the holder" is provided. Therefore, irrespective of the "depth" of the recording medium ("size along the insertion direction," see page 4, lines 14-15 of the specification), it is possible to connect the second connector of the recording medium to the first connector of the drive unit.

On the other hand, Araki discloses at column 7, lines 7-14:

When most of the disk 4 is inserted within the player housing as shown in FIG. 4, the second arms 49 and 50 are brought to a condition where they are nearly parallel to the first arm members 41 and 42. As a result, the free end parts of the second arm members 49 and 50 cause the other detection switches 54 and 55 to be closed simultaneously via the sheet springs 51 and 52.

That is, when the second arms 49 and 50 are parallel to the first arm members 41 and 42, the detection switches 54 and 55 are turned ON (the operational state represented by B=1 in Figure 9 of Araki).

Then, as shown at column 7, lines 32-43 of Araki, when B=1 (and A=0) in step S5, in step S6, the disk 4 is pinched by the four pinching rollers 49b, 49c, 50b, and 50c. Then, in step S7, the now-pinched disk 4 is carried to the turntable 19.

When the second arms 49 and 50 are parallel to the first arm members 41 and 42, the center of the disk 4 coincides with the center of the four pinching rollers 49b, 49c, 50b, and 50c. Therefore, the front loading disk player of Araki guides the center of the disk 4 to the turntable 19, regardless of variations in the diameter of the disk 4.

The second arms 49 and 50 of Araki, which the Primary Examiner relies on as anticipating the clamp mechanism limitation of claim 1, do not teach or suggest "a clamp mechanism configured to guide the insertion side of the recording medium to a predetermined position in the holder," because Araki can only position the center of the disk 4 between the arms 49 and 50 but with no predetermined position of an "insertion side" with respect to the holding member 13. The disks 4, of course, have no insertion side or connector thereon.

Accordingly, Araki fails to produce an effect like that possible with the invention of claim 1, whereby recording media of different depths having a second connector on the insertion side can be loaded into a drive unit.

For at least the reasons set forth above, it is believed that claim 1 is allowable over Araki because Araki does not teach or suggest each of the limitations of claim 1 as set forth in that claim.

Claim 12 depends from claim 1 and is allowable over Araki for at least that reason. Claim 12 is amended so as to further clarify the subject matter of the present invention over Araki by specifying that "the clamp mechanism comprises a first part engaged with one side of the recording medium and a second part engaged with another side of the recording medium so that the recording medium is held between the first and second parts of the clamp mechanism."

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1 and 12 should be withdrawn.

4. Allowable Subject matter

The Primary Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 2-11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and that claim 13 is allowed.

Claim 2 is rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of both claims 1 and 2, including some of the amendments of claim 1 set forth in this paper and amendments of the original claim 2 limitations made for the sake of clarity. It is believed that claim 2 is allowable.

Claim 3 is rewritten in independent form including substantially all of the limitations of independent claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that claims 2-11 are now allowable and the objection to these claims should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, the Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance and respectfully urge the Examiner to pass this case to issue. The Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned attorney as needed in order to advance the examination of this application.

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The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 12-0415. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, then the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed